

THE ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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INGLEWOOD ARCHITECTS' REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL GAINING STEAM

ALMOST ALRIGHT



Market Street's vacant Fox Theater.

SAM LUBELL

It's tough to fight the forces of civic decay, particularly in a place like LA's struggling Inglewood. But two local architects are proposing a new plan—currently gaining momentum in City Hall—to revitalize the area's most underutilized resource: the beautiful but largely empty main thorough-

fare called Market Street.

The architects Christopher Mercier and Douglas Pierson of (fer) Studio worked together at Frank Gehry's office before starting their own firm. They've been in Inglewood since 2003.

Their scheme would **continued on page 3**

CLEANTECH CORRIDOR COMPETITION ANNOUNCES WINNERS



Project Umbrella

CONSTANTIN BOINCAN

Clean and Green

Mushroom-shaped treatment plants, a river that is both community center and energy hub rather than

storm drain, and districts that breathe and recycle like humans—these are samples from the winning competitors

in AN and SCI-Arc's Cleantech Corridor and Green District competition. Entrants were asked to rethink and redesign the 2,000-acre development zone on the eastern edge of **continued on page 6**

MOSS' NEW SAMITAU TOWER LOOMS OVER CULVER CITY



TOM BONNER

STACKED

Standing on the third floor of Eric Owen Moss' new Samitaur Tower in Culver City is an illuminating experience. You get a view of the treeline and cityscape that few in this low-scaled place ever do. You can also see the progress of the snaking and elevated Expo Light Rail line, which is nearing completion and should be rolling around the **continued on page 8**

MOOD LIGHTS

FROM GALLERY-STYLE SCOOPS TO BOHEMIAN BULBS, LIGHTING FOR RESTAURANTS PROVIDES THE RIGHT ATMOSPHERE. PLUS NEW PUBLIC FIXTURES. SEE PAGES 11-15

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LA'S NEW DESIGN GUIDELINES ON THE LINE

SHAPE-SHIFTER

Urban design excellence and quality architecture haven't always been front and center in LA's planning documents. But spurred by an effort to revamp its community plans, the **continued on page 2**



A NEW GALLERY BY WHY ARCHITECTURE.
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SUPPORTING CAST

In the entertainment industry, actors are often critiqued for their choice of roles. Are they risking becoming typecast, or are they playing against type? Are they too indie? Too commercial? And are they making wise choices for their long-term careers?

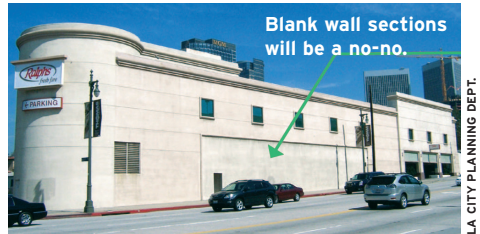
The projects architects pursue also signal their ambitions. One type of project that stirs up particular controversy within firms is whether to go after the role of executive architect/architect of record. That is, to play the supporting role to a design firm. The projects can be glamorous and lucrative, but the role can come with the stigma of being “the guys that carry the bags,” as one architect recently described it to me.

One of the Bay Area’s well-respected firms, EHDD, recently signed on as the architect of record on not just one, but both of the big upcoming art museum projects in the area—SFMOMA and the Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archive. (The design architects are, respectively, Snøhetta and Diller Scofidio + Renfro.) It’s pretty easy to see what EHDD brings to the table. Established in 1946 by Joseph Esherick, a founding father of Northern California modernism, the firm has a design reputation of its own based on many thoughtful public buildings, including the world-famous Monterey Bay Aquarium. It is currently designing a super-sustainable new home along the waterfront for one of San Francisco’s most beloved institutions, the Exploratorium. Although it has no specific expertise in art museums, EHDD certainly has experience with cultural institutions of that scale—and with large, complex additions.

But does it set the firm up for designing a signature art museum? In my casual conversations with the firm’s principals, that expectation was part of the motivation for taking on these jobs. Past history would indicate the contrary. It’s hard to think of even a single case where a firm has gone from the strength of a supporting role on one project to becoming the breakout star on the next. Instead, the firm risks being pigeonholed as the supporting cast, with the design architect getting all the glory. (Who remembers who the architects of record were on the de Young Museum or the California Academy of Sciences? Respectively, they were Fong & Chan and Stantec.) EHDD has already established a design reputation, so one could argue that it has nothing to lose from taking on the supporting role, though how much it has to gain remains questionable. For a lesser-known firm, it would be an even trickier call.

With the two projects, EHDD will undoubtedly learn more about the design of art museums. And they’ll be paid well for it. But the issue is whether anyone will give them credit for it, or whether they—and others like them—will be labeled as an “also-ran” by future commissioners of such projects. After all, unlike the entertainment industry, there is no award for Best Supporting Architect.

LYDIA LEE



SHAPE-SHIFTER continued from front page

Los Angeles City Planning Department is hoping to change that, proposing broad new residential, commercial, and industrial design guidelines. Still under review, the plans have already encountered resistance. Some wonder if the voluntary regulations will be powerful enough, while others fear they’ll encourage too much development.

If passed, the new guidelines, now in draft form, would emphasize “attractive building design,” and stress pedestrian scale, public space, streetscape activation and improvement, contextual sensitivity, sustainability, and landscaping. They would de-emphasize parking lots, driveways, blank walls, sunken entries, and buildings out of scale or character with their neighborhoods.

“It’s another tool that the community and developers can use when designing projects,” said City Planning Associate Michelle Sorkin. She describes the guidelines as qualitative, as opposed to neighborhood plans, which are tailored to specific locations and filled with exacting regulations.

Will Wright, director of community affairs for AIA/LA, appreciates that the guidelines encourage thinking from a pedestrian point of view. “My problem is if the developer wants to build by code, they don’t have to adhere to this. How can we have them mean anything if they’re voluntary?” he said.

The regulations won’t be binding, noted Sorkin, because “there’s no one-size-fits-all approach for the city.” She points to community plans as the tools for binding regulation.

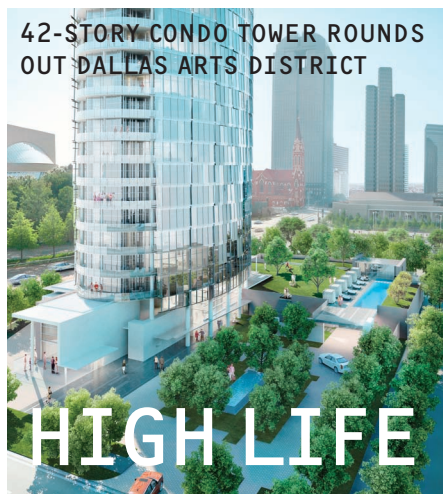
Yet some community members fear the guidelines will wreak havoc on the built environment. In a letter to the website Citywatch LA, Ken Alpern, a former board member of the Mar Vista Community Council, contends that the guidelines will “destroy single-family home neighborhoods and... overdensify/overdevelop our city into oblivion.” Others have claimed that the guidelines are being rushed through without enough public comment.

“The issue of there not being enough time to look at these is a fair criticism,” said John Kaliski, principal at Urban Partners, although the planning department has pushed a vote back to November from October to get more public input. But, he noted, “there’s nothing in there that says that LA should be a denser city.” Sorkin reiterated that the guidelines “do not imply a certain scale.”

The guidelines’ necessity became apparent during the city’s ongoing process to update the more than 20 specific plans for its 35 community plan areas. Many of these plans have overlapping design elements, while others have no design guidelines at all. The guidelines could reduce confusion and fill in the gaps.

Their visual format—filled with pictures, maps, and diagrams as opposed to charts and numbers—is meant to be more accessible than past planning documents. And their content derives from past Planning Director Gail Goldberg’s set of planning guidelines called “Do Real Planning,” launched in 2007. “We’re not reinventing the wheel here,” said Sorkin. “But this is a much more user-friendly tool.” **SAM LUBELL**

42-STORY CONDO TOWER ROUNDS OUT DALLAS ARTS DISTRICT



COURTESY JOHNSON FAIN

Dallas has seen the recent completion of several major architectural projects in its cultural district, including buildings by Renzo Piano, Joshua Prince-Ramus and Rem Koolhaas, and Norman Foster. The final piece of that puzzle, providing much-needed residential space, is Los Angeles-based Johnson Fain’s 42-story, 500-foot-tall condominium tower known as Museum Tower.

The 123-unit structure, set to be completed by 2013, is the tallest building in this section of Dallas since Philip Johnson’s Comerica Bank Tower (originally called Momentum Place). “It’s a symbol of the growing arts community here,” said firm principal Scott Johnson. It is also a symbol of the region’s abundance of natural gas, the source of much of Dallas’ art-world largesse.

The tower will be shaped like a narrow oval in plan, providing unobstructed views while

giving the building a pronounced presence, said Johnson. Glass cladding the facade, which will tip inward below and outward above, will alternate from clear to translucent to opaque, providing variety and breaking down the building’s bulk.

“I was interested in doing something pure, because the neighborhood is full of a lot of architectural testosterone,” said Johnson, who compares the tower to a shaft of light. Balconies along the structure’s flanks will be huge, measuring 12 to 16 feet deep, and erasing what Johnson calls the “fear factor” often associated with overhangs at such heights. The completion of any tall building also has its own fear factor in the current economy: “I’m sure everyone will be watching it with beady eyes,” joked the architect.

EAVESDROP> THE EDITORS

WHAT'S THE OPPOSITE OF SCHADENFREUDE?

It's the athletic event that everyone—or at least a few sports fiends—has been talking about: the LA Architects' Softball League. The winner this year was none other than Gehry Partners, a firm no one could accuse of flying under the wire or of deserving more laurels. The win came after a slow start to the season in which many of the perennial favorites' favorite players were injured or away. But GP picked themselves off the mat, first to wipe the floor with Jones Partners' (a team that includes none other than yours truly) in the semifinals and then to outgun the team from Graft (with only about one member of the firm actually playing). Suspicions that Gehry's team has been using performance-enhancing drugs—or perhaps, even, practicing—have yet to be proven, and more likely were fabricated by bitter gossip writers, like Eaves.

DOUBLE DIPPERS

Perhaps we missed the memo, but it seems that a lot of firms have decided it's OK to enter their winning competition schemes in multiple competitions. First it was done by student **Ryan Lovett**, who won the student category for *AN* and SCI-Arc's New Infrastructure competition, only to place in the LA Forum's Dingbat 2.0 competition earlier this summer. Then a team led by **Joshua Stein**, which won the professional category for New Infrastructure, won a merit award for RAILLA's call for entries at the end of the summer. It seems like both talented architects could have developed new schemes for these competitions. Is this proper etiquette? What would Hoyle's say?

ON THE LINE

We hear from a reliable source that the Academy of Art University in San Francisco's Architecture School, under the direction of **Alberto Bertoli**, may lose its accreditation. According to Academy of Art's website, the school is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, whose last visit to the school came in February of 2007. Their next visit comes this fall, so stay tuned.

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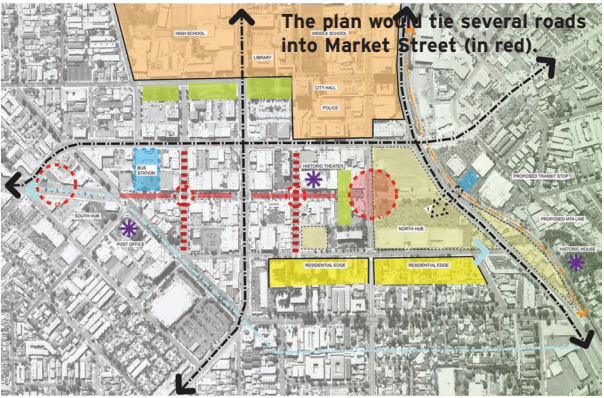
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BRUCE DAMONTE

Long abandoned, the 1956 Woolworth building in downtown Sacramento has been reinvented as the Cosmopolitan. The 50,000-square-foot mixed-use building, which was once fronted by a drab Woolworth's pharmacy, now contains the California Musical Theater's 200-plus seat live cabaret and the Cosmo Cafe restaurant on the ground floor, as well as the Social Nightclub and commercial office space on the second floor. The firm gave the building what has been described as "a facelift worthy of Joan Collins." It opened up the structure by glazing the ground floor and by removing exterior walls at the second-floor corner overlooking the intersection of 10th and K streets, creating a large patio for the nightclub. The project is one of several engines for the redevelopment of the K Street corridor, Sacramento's emerging downtown entertainment district. That area also contains several new restaurants, bars, clubs, and other fun destinations.



COURTESY (FER) STUDIO

ALMOST ALRIGHT continued from front page rehabilitate the small retail and commercial street, a once bustling

and elegant center currently overrun with vacant storefronts, abandoned theaters, and junky stores. They'd

place anchors on each end, vibrant infill along its length, revamped storefronts and streetscapes, and—perhaps most importantly—a connection to the upcoming extension of the city's Expo light rail line, which will have a station here when completed in the next couple of years.

"Nobody knows about Market Street," said Mercier. "But it already has the infrastructure to be something special." The street is narrow, pedestrian-friendly, and lined with shops, rich plantings, small islands, and beautiful (if not well-kempt) historic

buildings along its entire length. "Everyone wants to save downtown, but they don't have the faith in what it can be," added Pierson.

The visually-oriented plan ("Charts and numbers don't get anyone inspired," said Mercier) is set with detailed schematics, maps, and land-use proposals. It also leaves open the possibility of such cutting-edge elements as an urban agriculture zone, a renewable energy station, adaptive re-use zoning, and even a green belt and a water reservoir. The two architects also have suggested closing

the street off to cars, similar to Santa Monica's Third Street promenade.

The architects say the idea, which has been embraced by Inglewood's new mayor, Daniel Tabor, could be paid for with the influx of redevelopment funds to the city. Tabor adds that additional funds could come from bond money, HUD grants, and private investment.

So far, the plan has been held up by the poor economy and government indecision, said Tabor. The city is also currently fighting in court over one of the major land parcels

on the site. Plus, following years of corruption in city leadership, failed promises, and the possibility of gentrification, the population is wary of large projects.

But the two press ahead, meeting with community groups and pressuring the city to make a move before it misses the boat, especially since the addition of light rail is almost certain to spur future development. "We need to look at not just what can happen, but how it can happen and commit to making it happen," Tabor said. **SL**

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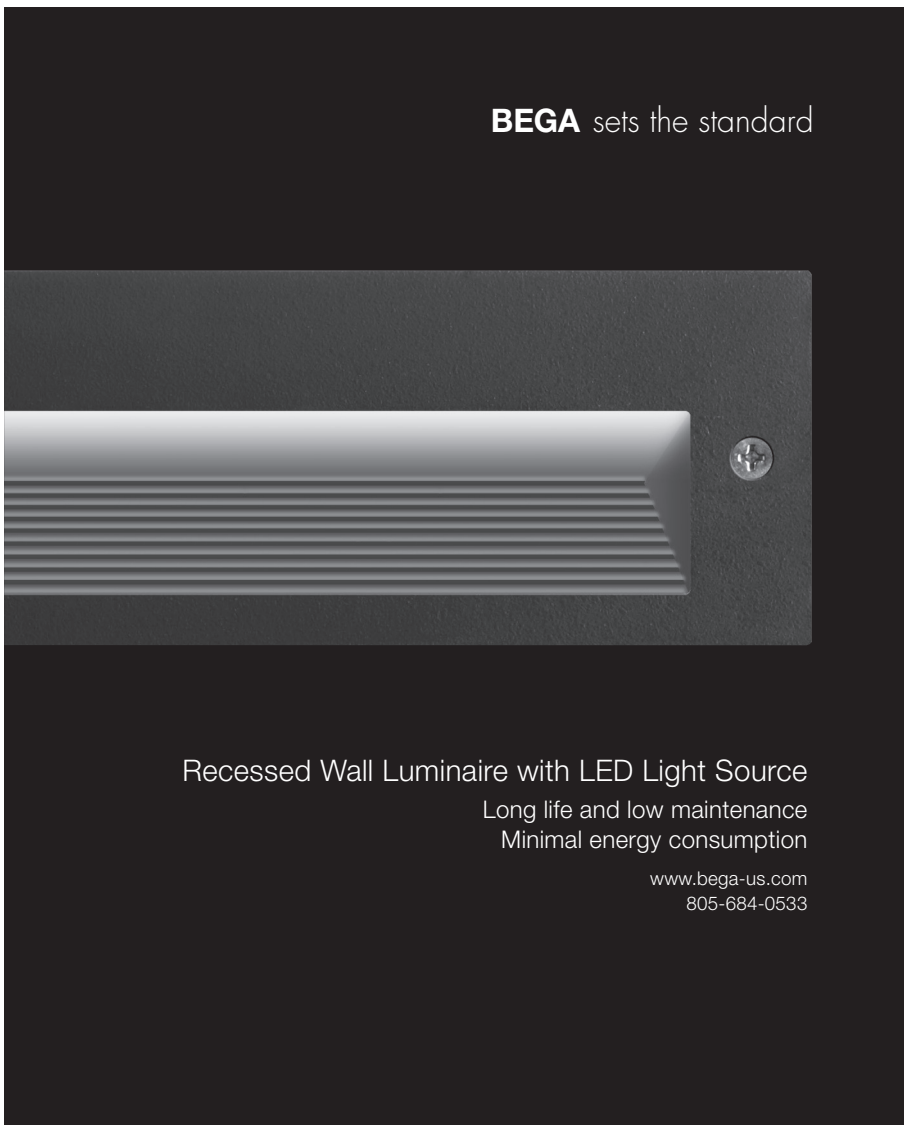
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ONE OF CHARLES GWATHMEY'S FINAL PROJECTS



Crocker Art Museum expansion

BRUCE DA MONTE/COURTESY CROCKER ART MUSEUM

structure is a massing of simple geometric forms. Interlocking cylinders create a dramatic double-height entry rotunda. "Because the new building is three times the building we were connecting to, we tried to break down its scale, expressing it as a series of mini-buildings using zinc, white metal panels, and glass, so that it didn't appear as one big bulky mass," said Gerry Gendreau, the project architect. "We tried to develop a dialogue between the modern and historic elements in the most sympathetic way we could."

PARTING GESTURE

On October 10, Sacramento's Crocker Art Museum

unveiled its new expansion by Gwathmey Siegel & Associates of New York. At 125,000 square feet, the \$75 million addition becomes a new architectural identity for the oldest art museum in the West. Yet it also represents one of the last major works by Charles Gwathmey, who passed away last summer.

"Charles said that everyone has a little bit of a desire to be an architect, and he wanted everyone to have that experience," said Lial Jones, director of the Crocker. "He was very open to taking ideas from others, and it was

a terrific collaboration."

The firm has been responsible for several other high-profile museum expansions—most famously, an addition to the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Guggenheim in 1992—and was selected to prepare a masterplan for the museum in 2000. At that time, the museum's main display space was the portrait gallery in one of its two 1860s Victorian buildings, which meant that over 95 percent of its 15,000-item collection was sequestered away in storage, including an extensive collection of master drawings.

On the exterior, the new

To bridge the contemporary addition with the interconnected Victorian buildings, the firm worked to match up the floor levels. To that end, it sunk the auditorium below grade, placed the administrative offices on the second floor, and placed the galleries on the third. The 35,000 square feet of galleries are primarily daylight, using sawtooth skylights. To showcase the old gallery's ornate form, the entrance leads to a hall with a 120-foot-long window wall that frames the historic building across the courtyard.

LL

FROM POWER STATION TO ART GALLERY



KELLY BARRIE

MAKEOVER MAGIC

Just as LACMA's new Resnick Pavilion opened, Venice inaugurated a much smaller building impressive enough to also have a profound impact: wHY Architecture's new L&M Arts, which opened on September 25.

The gallery, spreading out along the south side of Venice Boulevard, features copious landscaping to soften the transition from the street, and to provide a garden setting—a rarity for galleries. And it manages to combine old and new in a way that "makes the old feel alive," said wHY partner Kulapat Yantrasast.

The project is composed of three main elements. First, the adaptive reuse of a WPA-era brick power station, which the firm fitted with pristine white walls to contrast with the building's existing concrete slab system. Second, a tall, diamond-shaped new gallery made from an irregular pattern of recycled bricks (taken from former downtown LA office buildings) that somehow looks older than the actual historic building.

And third, a sleek linear bar, clad with richly textured exposed aggregate plaster and large horizontal windows, which connects the two and provides offices and a private viewing room for the gallery.

Inside, the galleries not only merge old and new, but natural and artificial light—an ethereal element that immediately draws your eye upward before you take in the art. The new building's giant skylight, with its exposed steel frame, is complemented by uplights that delineate the space between the white walls and the wooden rafters. The older space's long, central skylight is fitted with a scrim, evocative of a James Turrell Skyspace. Fluorescents inside augment and mimic that skylight effect at night.

Overall, it's a huge step for a community that, while rich in artistic talent, has few world-class galleries to show for it. The first show—a controversial set of sculptures by artist Paul McCarthy—drew huge crowds. It's a promising start. SL



COURTESY DS+R

California Bound

New York-based Diller Scofidio + Renfro are the new darlings of California. Fresh off major projects at the High Line and Lincoln Center in New York, the firm won commissions this summer to design the new Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive in the Bay Area, and Eli Broad's new contemporary art museum in downtown Los Angeles. *AN's* Sam Lubell talked with the firm's founding principals, Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio, about the new work, the direction of the firm, and whether or not they consider themselves "starchitects."

The Architect's Newspaper: You'd never worked in California, and now you have two large commissions. Are you surprised you won both? Some people thought winning Berkeley would exclude you from the Broad commission.

Ricardo Scofidio: I wasn't that surprised. The commission we knew we wouldn't get because of Berkeley was SFMOMA [the expansion was won by Snøhetta]. I thought that there was such a programmatic difference between Berkeley and Eli Broad's project that it

wasn't a problem.

Some people are upset that local architects aren't leading these projects. What do you say?

RS: We'll be working with local architects (EHDD in Berkeley; Gensler in LA), so it's not as though we're coming in and trying to take work out of everybody's hands.

Elizabeth Diller: It's a different world now. There are some very good architects out there and they're sprinkled around the world. It's just a question of getting the right fit for the right project.

You're not allowed to release specific details on these California projects. Why is that? When can we get more details?

RS: Eli has asked us not to release anything to the press yet. We have to respect that. Who knows why. It may be because he hasn't worked with us before and doesn't know how we're going to work together. I don't know if public review will be part of the process.

ED: We're very much in the process and don't want to give anything away before it's cooked. This is typical. Until you can

confirm everything, clients are hesitant to put stuff out there because then you get attached to an image, and sometimes a project doesn't fulfill that image. We got a good start on Broad in August, and we should be ready with schematics in December. I think the same with Berkeley.

Without revealing the designs, can you tell us more about your strategies for each project?

ED: I think on Berkeley we really saw the potential to do a more complex, layered scheme. Our work at Lincoln Center prepared us well for dealing with existing conditions and an existing building, and in reading between the lines and trying to reinvent what was there. It's not a blank slate; we're not starting from scratch. It's not a formally derived strategy; it's more about reading the site thoroughly and finding a strategy.

I've likened it to one of those butcher charts. Every part is used and not discarded. We're treating the site as a partially found object that optimizes every bit of the area that's there. Also, it constantly changes its nature. It's not consistent. It's inside and outside.

The problem in LA is that you've got Disney Hall next door, which is so exuberant. You basically don't want to try to compete. You just have to try to change the terms of engagement. We've paid a lot of attention to the Grand Avenue project as an urban ambition. And we're interested in the problem of building an exhibition space and storage space together. You don't typically do that. It's given us the ability to find the intersections and a kind of dialogue.

We are also very conscious of automobiles and automobile culture. It has to do with the moving car and driving by. Knowing that viewers will be sometimes moving by it at three miles an hour and sometimes at 30.

Are you anxious about working with Eli Broad? He has a

reputation of being difficult to collaborate with.

RS: That's what everybody says, but I must say that I play a very quiet role in his presence and Liz is able to kind of get through to him and talk to him and argue with him without it becoming antagonistic. We're very fortunate in that respect. Who knows what the future holds, but so far we're moving ahead. I wasn't anxious, although after doing Lincoln Center with all of the stakeholders and voices and people you had to deal with, it's kind of relaxing to deal with one person who makes the decisions.

ED: We've gotten along really well. When people are aligned in aspirations, it busts through whatever differences there might be. He's a very strong guy with a great collection and very, very involved, and we've had a lot of support. I think the project is very important for him and his wife personally, and it's important to them to get it right.

Your careers are taking off. Are you scared your firm will grow too fast? Do you consider yourselves "starchitects" now?

RS: I think we've been growing too quickly for the last ten years. It's a way of life for us. We've always put a lot of time and energy into all of our projects, whether it was a water glass or a theater piece. We just continue to do the same thing. The scale has changed. I think right now, we're very comfortable in what we have. I think we'll be very selective in terms of what we take on and what we don't. We're not grabbing anything that walks through the front door.

I'm surprised when I wake up and people say, oooh and aah. I don't try to judge myself in relation to everyone else. And because we've never planned how we're going to proceed with our lives, I don't think about it in terms of: we've arrived. As far as I'm concerned, we arrived when we started working together.

The firm is at 60 people, and we'll probably add about ten people over the next month or so. We haven't opened new offices in LA or San Francisco. It becomes a kind of madness when you start opening up offices elsewhere. We have enough work here. We're happy here.

ED: I don't really know what "starchitect" means. I take it as a pejorative, because it means that you're sought-after. It comes hard to us. We don't roll it out of the drawer. We don't repeat ourselves. Each project is torturous and joyful, and it's always an inspiration. We don't think we get projects because of celebrity; we think we earn them. We fought hard to get these projects. The alignments happened not because of our name. We had the right ideas for those sites. That being said, we're really glad to be seen at a high level and to have the chance to compete. I've always dreamt that we would, when we stepped into the practice, and we never stepped away from our art and our other research.

You started out with conceptual art, and then moved to architecture. Often, you combine the two. Now it seems that you're redesigning cities.

ED: At times, it's been difficult for people to hire us because they can't look at our work and say, "that's what we're going to get." We do think a certain way and design a certain way, and we have a vocabulary that people recognize as ours. We are very interested in vision. We're very interested in social interaction. How the site enables you to move in space. These are issues that get embedded and lock it in to recognizable forms. The disciplinary boundaries between architecture and urbanism need to be dissolved. We're always operating in different disciplines at the same time. That's never changed.

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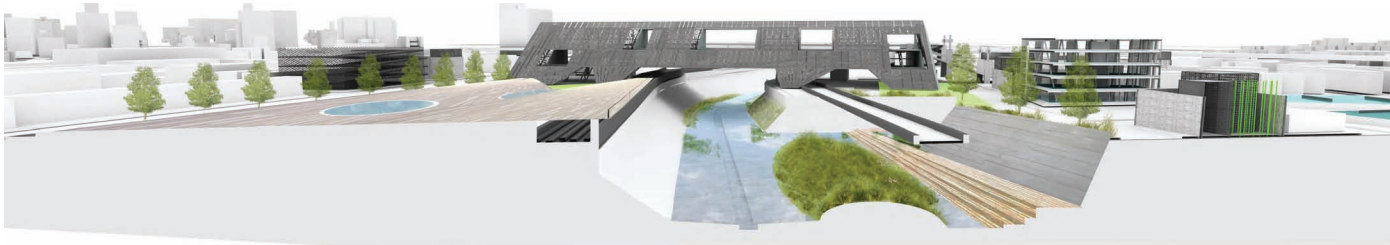


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COURTESY RESPECTIVE DESIGNERS

Clockwise from top left: The scheme by Mia Lehrer & Associates, Buro Happold, Elizabeth Timme, and Jim Suhr; Labtop's *Greenoplasty*; *MessyTech* by architecture students from the University of Virginia.

CLEAN AND GREEN continued from front page downtown Los Angeles that the city has set aside for clean-tech manufacturing and related uses. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa has said the district will be the hub of the city's future economy.

"We're a young city with a realistic opportunity to define and implement the next conceptual city," said SCI-Arc director Eric Owen Moss. Partners on the project included the City of Los Angeles, the Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles, and the LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The jury included architects Michael Maltzan, Stan Allen, and Ming Fung; landscape architect Dennis McGlade of Olin Partnership; and officials from the partner agencies.

The winning professional scheme by Constantin Boincean, Ralph Bertram, and Aleksandra Danielak of Oslo, Norway—*Project Umbrella*—revolves around large mushroom-like structures called solar evaporators that would not only serve as memorable symbols, but via a system of black-water treatment and clean-water dispersal would transform large parts of the city grid into greener and more attractive public spaces. The second prize went to a scheme from Los Angeles-based office Labtop, called *Greenoplasty*, which removes cars from the area through a local rail line and creates a system of lightweight housing on top of the area's existing warehouses. Third prize went to a team including Buro Happold and Mia Lehrer & Associates, which conceived a

practical overhaul of the corridor integrating systems for energy creation (including solar arrays and hydroelectric power), waste management, transportation, and water runoff, retrofitting existing industrial buildings for more flexible uses.

Winning student projects include *MessyTech* by a team from the University of Virginia's School of Architecture, where inherently messy industrial processes lead to cleaner results. Their first-prize proposal weaves together diverse infrastructures, people, and activities to make for a rich and dynamic urban fabric. Second prize went to Ji Hoon Kim of the Bartlett School of Architecture in London. In this proposal, a cable-car system enables the movement of people from the current Arts District and

other industrial areas over the Los Angeles River and through the New Integrated Creative Industry, enabling more social activities and relationships between the creative industry area and other industrial areas in downtown LA. Ryan Lovett and Jesse Keenan from the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation at Columbia University took a third place prize with their idea for an intricate series of agritech businesses. Centered around a large campus with sustainable and innovative architecture, the new zone would include a dense network of food production, fish farming, and mobile food trucks to aid in immediate dispersal. (To see all the winning entries and honorable mentions, go to www.archpaper.com/cleantech). **SL**

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ZUMTOBEL

Clockwise from top left:
The museum's planted roof; one
of the display rooms; the entrance
ramp in the evening; intricate
concrete work on the exterior.



Generally, the most effective architectural designs make you feel welcome and comfortable. But in a museum meant to recall the horrors of the Holocaust, that mission is turned on its head. So it's no surprise that the most emotionally resonant spaces in the new Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust are those where the rawness and constriction of the building evoke a period that the museum doesn't want you to forget.

Disjointedly located in a park just behind the hyperhappy Grove in West Hollywood, the museum, designed by Belzberg Architects, is the new home for an institution that has existed since 1962. It previously occupied a relatively small and unremarkable space in an office building on Wilshire Boulevard.

Belzberg didn't have the size or the budget of some of the world's more famous Holocaust museums,

such as Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin, Peter Eisenman's Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, or Moshe Safdie's Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

But within a 32,000-square-foot footprint, at about \$350 a square foot, he managed to accomplish a lot. The boldest step was the decision to bury the museum underground, preserving the rolling parkland that was donated to the



COURTESY BELZBERG ARCHITECTS

museum by the state and highlighting visitors' movement into a realm distinct from their ordinary lives.

The structure's undulating form echoes the curving landscape. The roof is planted with native fauna and a natural irrigation system, and concrete-lined pathways zigzag sharply, preserving the calm of the park but indicating all is not quite right underneath.

As a jutting entry ramp compresses the visitor's perspective and seems to slice through the ground, things start to change quickly. Circulation is carefully choreographed throughout, making you cognizant that you're entering a building that Belzberg says "is going to provide some discomfort."

That sense of discomfort is heightened right away by twisted shotcrete columns,

which were formed from digital models and sculpted while still wet by a local pool contractor. Bleak raw concrete walls and ceilings slope in multiple directions, throwing perspective off and evoking a grim, trapped feeling. Descending into the story of the Holocaust—told in separate spaces formed by flexible black cubicles that open up to the museum above—the sense of compression and darkness increases. The story starts in pre-World War II Europe; then the lights get dimmer and the ceilings lower as the full horrors of concentration camps and mass killings of the Holocaust unfold. Finally, as the stories of hope and liberation are detailed, the visitor turns a corner and returns to the light.

An educational system, via iPod, provides a more interactive experience.

Exhibits include films, memorabilia, models, and digital components—including touch-screen technology—that allow more to be told in this relatively small space.

One of the most powerful aspects of the experience are the glimmers of natural light coming in from above, through translucent glass that reveals both glow and movement, but not clear views. The murky light provides some orientation while also evoking a sense of the isolation that Jews must have felt at the time. In a children's memorial outside, the sound of children playing in a nearby park trickles in provocatively as you sit in a constricted space with only the sky above you. Nearby lies an amphitheater and a large memorial sculpture of black steel pillars by architect Herb Nadel that the museum inaugurated years ago.

I went through the museum twice, measuring my reactions. Belzberg could have gone even further with the darkness, twisting, and compression. Now you can only move so far into the darkness, while it might have been even more effective to make some exhibit walls touch the ceiling, heightening the sense of isolation. Concrete walls, ceilings, and floors make the space noisy, dulling the sense of dislocation as you move into the story.

Still, bold gestures far outweigh any shortcomings. Under difficult circumstances, Belzberg has created a memorable museum that broadens understanding not only of a horrible time but of the raw emotional impact that architecture's spatial and tectonic qualities can deliver. **SL**



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Samitaur Tower at Hayden Tract.



TOM BONNER

STACKED continued from front page

neighborhood within the next couple of years. Finally, you get a look at a nearby corner of La Cienega and National, where Moss is designing yet another tall building.

The 72-foot-tall tower is composed of five off-kilter, stacked circular steel rings. Its raw steel construction and jutting forms are a conspicuous new beacon for Hayden Tract, the massive creative office complex that Moss began working on almost 20 years ago. From this vantage, you can see several of his unusual buildings, including the Stealth (which looks like a stealth bomber),

the Beehive, and the Umbrella.

Besides being a great lookout point, the tower will serve as a “vertical park,” said Moss, with a 200-plus-seat amphitheater dug underneath, landscaping around it, and a new restaurant and gallery next door.

But the tower’s main purpose—to display “culturally significant content” via central projectors that beam onto a series of curved acrylic screens—hasn’t been worked out. The tower’s zig-zagging profile will allow for multiple outlooks, including views toward the overpass, the freeway, National Boulevard, and the light rail, for instance. Displays, said Moss, could include photographs, artworks, animated films (the team has tested a Kurosawa film), and so on.

The purpose is “to bring excellence in arts and sciences to all socioeconomic levels,” said Christie Cossman, a spokesperson for the towers’ clients, Frederick and Laurie Samitaur Smith. The owners have said they plan to build seven similar towers in Los Angeles, as well as others in Los Alamos, Albuquerque, and Vienna.

Meanwhile, Moss is hoping he can build two more buildings in the immediate vicinity. One 12-story tower, a couple of blocks east, has both planning approval and initial funding. Supported via a skin of steel tubes, the tower would be one of the only office high-rises in South LA. Moss had less luck with a proposed project just adjacent, a transit-oriented, mixed-use development that the MTA has since replaced with a simple parking lot.

“They’ve missed a great opportunity,” said Moss, who nonetheless plans to continue making his mark on this part of LA. **SL**

SEATTLE TAPS FIELD OPERATIONS FOR MAJOR SHORELINE PROJECT



COURTESY WSDOT

ON THE WATERFRONT

Seattle is one of the latest cities to take on a major revitalization of its postindustrial embankments. In late September, Seattle selected James Corner Field Operations to take the lead in “transforming a gray and dreary transportation corridor into a vibrant, active, exciting public space,” said Karen Daubert, executive director of the Seattle Parks Foundation. The project, estimated at \$569 million, will provide nine acres of open space, made available when an elevated freeway along the city’s central waterfront on Elliot Bay is demolished. The Alaskan Way Viaduct, as it’s called, is an imposing physical and visual barrier that city planners have dreamed of removing for decades.

New York-based Field

Operations, which specializes in landscape and urban design, was part of the design team for the High Line, and is currently working on a new civic waterfront park in Santa Monica. The supporting cast includes New York-based SHoP Architects, as well as Seattle firm Mithun. The team was selected from a shortlist that included Gustafson Guthrie Nichol, Michael Van Valkenburgh, and Wallace Roberts & Todd.

The city arrived at its decision after the four firms made public presentations on September 15 at the city’s Benaroya Hall auditorium, attended by some 1,300 citizens. In his presentation, Corner played up the grit of the city. “It’s a working waterfront. It’s tough... I really hate waterfronts that are anesthetized and beautified

to the point of looking like every other city,” he said.

The park will depend on construction of an underground tunnel to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct, a \$3.1 billion project funded by state and federal dollars. The city has secured half of the funds. There will be no commercial development on the public property occupied by the viaduct. “We see this like the High Line in New York City, which is an excellent example of how public open space created opportunities for private development,” said Rick Sheridan, communications manager for the Seattle Department of Transportation. City officials have been clear on their stance against waterfront high-rises. “We do not want this to become Miami Beach,” said Councilwoman Sally Bagshaw.

The city has issued an RFQ for the construction team and, at press time, was planning to announce its selection in October. The construction and design teams will work together on the design and be “joined at the hip for the entirety of the project,” said Sheridan. Conceptual designs are set for next year, and construction is scheduled to begin in 2016, with the park slated for completion in 2018.

LL



In most residential backyards, the water feature is a modest affair. It might be a small pool sporting a clump of equisetum, there to provide a tiny respite from the rest of the designed environment.

But not in the case of a house designed by San Francisco firm Turnbull Griffin Haesloop in Atherton, a town in suburban Silicon Valley. The firm seized the chance to make an existing pond the central organizing idea for a new home located on a flag lot, an oasis set apart from the street. “We wanted to have the outdoors be the center of living on the site,” said architect Eric Haesloop, a principal at the firm that carries on the warm modernism of William Turnbull of Sea Ranch fame.

Though the existing home had a cracked foundation that made its renovation infeasible, the artificial 1,000-square-

foot koi pond in the backyard, much beloved by the clients, was expanded and reinforced. It literally borders the new house. The home’s foundation is the retaining wall for the pond. The house flows out onto the pond, with terraces off the public gathering spaces as well as the master bedroom, or the pond flows into the house via a glassed-in niche along the hall that sets apart the bedroom wing.

The other structures on the property—a studio office and a pool house overlooking a lap pool—are grouped in a loose semicircle around the pond. “We pushed the buildings as far out to the edges as we could, inverting the typical model where the house is a big massing in the center,” said Haesloop. The gurgling pond and the landscape by Ron Lutsko, Jr. thus became

the locus of energy, and the architecture, in restrained colors and simple shapes, is a graceful and unobtrusive mediator.

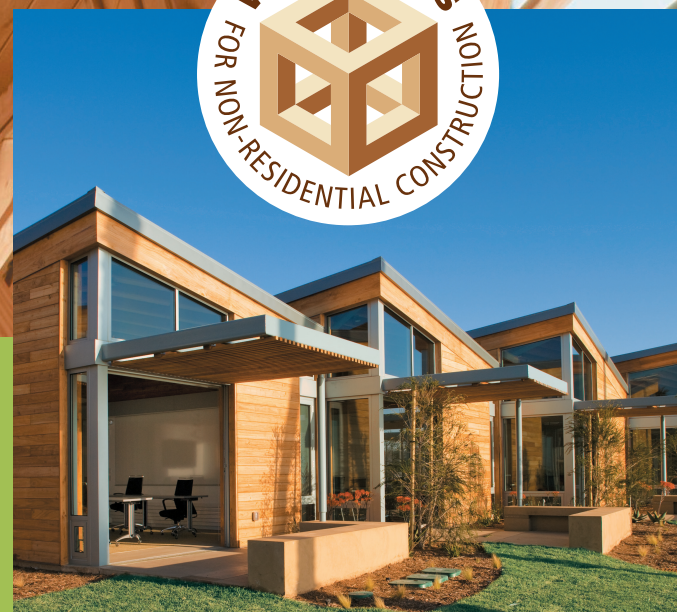
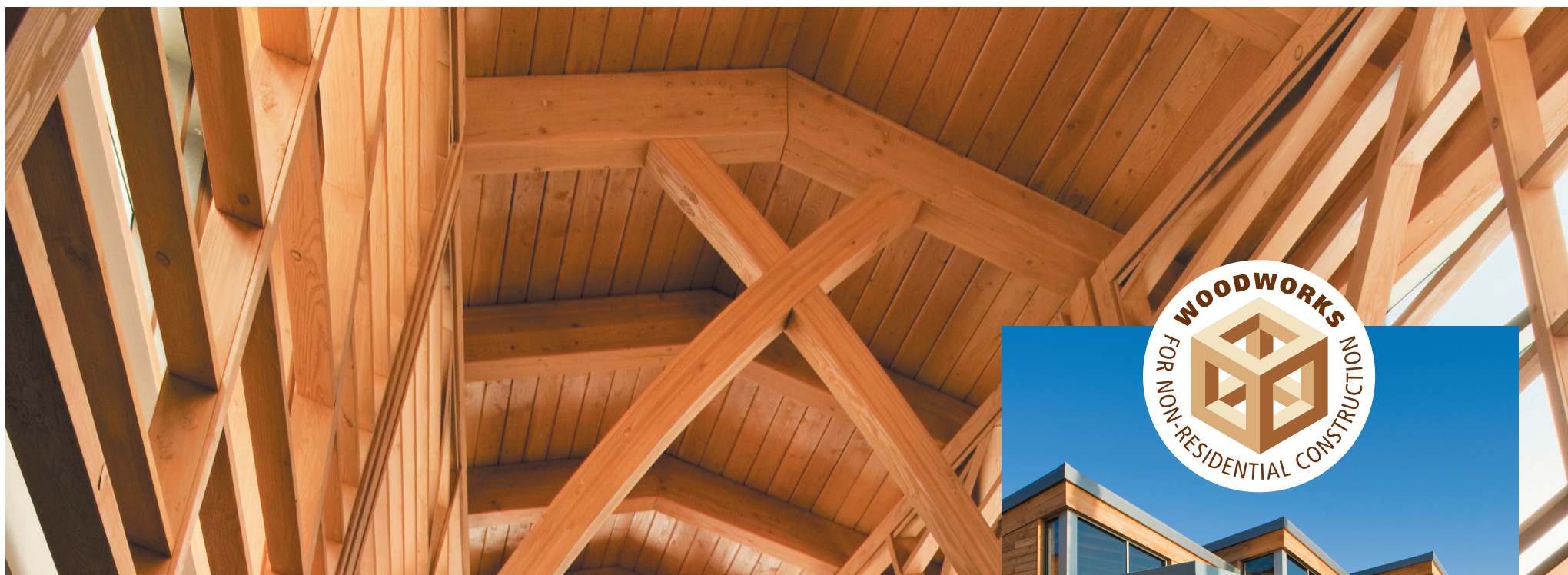
Pale beige gravel is used in lieu of formal pavers on the house’s wide forecourt, and whitewashed cedar slats cover the one-story facade. The effect of the sun-bleached colors and natural materials is a laid-back informality. The limestone flooring at the entrance continues into the house and out onto the terraces. Deep overhangs lined with cedar (in its natural color) lend warmth to the modern lines, while board-formed concrete walls—principally along the lap pool and pool house—create a sense of monumentality. Inside, the palette is equally subdued, with sycamore veneer covering walls of built-in cabinetry. The outside is ever present through walls of glass, with

voluminous glass barn doors that lend an industrial chic to the domestic space.

From the start, it was clear to the firm that their clients were keen to embrace all the possibilities of outdoor living. “Even when it was raining, we would still meet on the patio under an umbrella,” said Haesloop. A large outdoor living area, complete with fireplace and outdoor kitchen, is off to one side of the pond. The master suite’s outdoor shower, in its own courtyard, equals the size of the master bath. And the house has no air-conditioning system other than the breezes off the pond that cool the house through the generous openings of doors, windows, and operable skylights. **LL**

Clockwise from top left: The house is set around an expanded koi pond; roof overhangs are lined with cedar; rooms feel like pavilions; the long linear pool; view to the kitchen; interiors open up completely to the outside.

DAVID WAKELY



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Photos: (top) Duke Integrative Medicine, Duke University Medical Center, Duda/Paine Architects; (inset) Robert Paine Scripps Forum for Science, Society and the Environment at The Scripps Institution of Oceanography, Safdie Rabines Architects, photo Anne Garrison



Lighting is the centerpiece of three luminous Southern California restaurants and bars

By Sam Lubell
and Marissa Gluck

DAY FOR LIGHT

Good lighting doesn't only contribute to space. Sometimes it becomes the defining element. Such is the case with these West Coast restaurants and bars, blessed with good architecture, but really distinguished by lighting schemes that achieve an artistry all their own. LA firm FreelandBuck was inspired by the work of James Turrell in creating large artificial light scoops, while Gulla Jonsdottir created what she called a pyramid of light from over 500 old-fashioned Edison lightbulbs that dominate her Hollywood nightclub My Studio. The combination of artificial and natural light is another mainstay of these projects, blurring the line between inside and out to create a sense of intricacy and ambiguity, playing a vital role in the "layering" of light that architect Peter Bentel, designer of Craft restaurant in Century City, said differentiates a flat surface from one with dimensionality and texture.



Previous page: One of the three light scoops. **Left:** Fluorescents made warmer by colorful backdrops. **Below:** Undulating plywood baffles modulate light and cast a glow.

Architects David Freeland and Brennan Buck were faced with the dilemma of how to create a space for a gourmet deli that had a contemporary architectural identity but also evoked the rustic appeal of the food. They were commissioned to carry this out inside a 1,000-square-foot storefront in Mar Vista.

Earl's Gourmet Grub, opened in May, had only a single overhead source of natural light, its skylight. Freeland and Buck set out to devise a way to reproduce that sense of natural light throughout the market, as well as add color and warmth. Inspired by the work of artist James Turrell, they designed two additional light "scoops" with 5-foot by 3-foot apertures alongside the real one, providing both artificial light and greater spatial definition.

Along the wall are secondary light sources, 18 linear fluorescent tubes divided into three sequences mounted against a colorful and intricate wall. "We wanted to bring warmer light into the space. That can be hard to do with fluorescents," said Freeland. "We wanted to paint the adjacent surfaces to reflect the light and create color." They also created an undulating corridor of plywood "baffles" to further modulate the light and cast an ambient glow through the shop. The rhythmic baffles also produce a spatial continuity from the front to the back of the space. The firm was able to work within a fairly constrained budget, as well. According to Freeland, Earl's spent about \$4,000 total on lighting.



LAWRENCE ANDERSON/ESTO

EARL'S GOURMET GRUB
MAR VISTA
FREELANDBUCK

CRAFT CENTURY CITY MARK HORTON DESIGN, BENTEL AND BENTEL

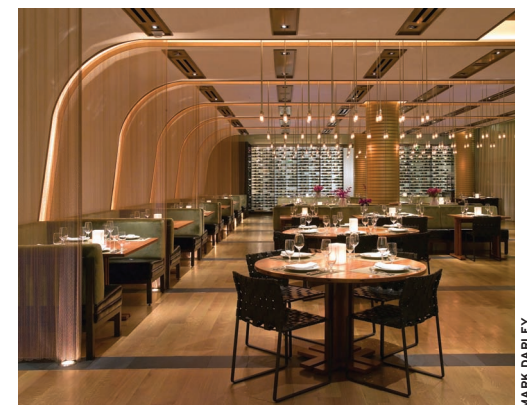


Lighting plays the lead role in defining the textured and varied architectural elements of this restaurant, an outpost of chef Tom Colicchio's fast-growing empire of eateries. The 300-seat space was built into a small pavilion in Century City, just adjacent to the CAA Building and the Century Plaza hotel. A floor-to-ceiling storefront allows natural light to flood the area during the day, supplemented with warm artificial light. At night, the lighting takes over, creating a dazzling interplay of surfaces, patterns, and baffling through the storefront.

While San Francisco architect Mark Horton worked with Bentel and Bentel on the design—based largely on craft expressions—he deferred to Bentel on the lighting. The latter devised a strategy that highlights the restaurant's surfaces, creates an intimate atmosphere and, of course, accentuates the presentation.

"It's dimmed, but it's very important that you see the food on your plate. It's one of the reasons you're eating there," said Peter Bentel.

Warm strips of blended incandescent and LED backlighting accentuate the restaurant's large curving fabric walls, which extend to the ceiling; perpendicular strips of recessed lighting offset these walls, creating a textured grid that extends to the ends of the restaurant and adds depth, drawing your eye upward. "We want to create layers of light," said Bentel. "You can't just light everything from above or below." Thin glowing Tesla exposed-filament chandeliers hanging from the ceiling bring added depth and a bit of orange sparkle to the composition. The intimate interaction between lighting, craftsmanship, and architecture is exhibited as well in the large coiled-wire curtains that are dramatically uplit by incandescents, differentiating spaces and changing the mood. Even more atmospheric are the glass wine storage units and a bar back; both are lit from behind by LEDs to reveal glowing colors and textures.



Above, left and right: Backlighting helps emphasize the spaces between Craft's fabric walls; hanging Tesla lights add extra glimmer.

MARK DARLEY

MY STUDIO
HOLLYWOOD
G PLUS DESIGN

Above and below:
Backlit metallic walls and clusters of cheese-grater hanging lamps; exposed filament bulbs are bundled into a chandelier known as the "pyramid."

SKOTT SNIDER



SCI-Arc grad Gulla Jonsdottir spent years as the deputy to well-known LA interior designer Dodd Mitchell. She's also worked for Richard Meier and Disney Imagineering, where she was a set designer for Euro and Tokyo Disneyland. Now with her own firm, G Plus Design, she designed My Studio nightclub in Los Angeles. With her penchant for dramatic scene-setting and a knack for the strategic use of unusual lighting, the pairing was a natural.

Jonsdottir's inspiration, she said, was the idea of an artists' studio open for a party where the mood is retro, bohemian, and sexy. The key lighting move was the use of large old Edison light bulbs with their exposed filaments. Their orange light casts a warm glow on the models and hipsters who check out the club and provides more old-school character than the usual Hollywood hotspot. As a centerpiece, a pyramid-like cluster of over 500 of these bulbs forms an appealing and flattering light sculpture.

Elsewhere, two lines of the bulbs create a "runway of light."

This being a nightclub, the light plays coy here; its presence is subtle behind columns and perforated metal. The effect is a knowing glamour evocative of a boudoir or somewhere else you're not supposed to be. Jonsdottir went to flea markets to find old photographers' lamps—that still work—to mix in with other found items, from antique fans to fabric-strewn columns. In a good way, it feels like a party gone really wild.



LIGHT UP

PUBLIC-SPACE LIGHTING USES THE NEWEST LED TECHNOLOGY.
BY JENNIFER K. GORSCHÉ

1 DISCERA 4 LED
SE'LUX

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2 FLUORESCENT-REPLACEMENT TUBE
LEDTRONICS

Incandescent-replacement technology manufacturer LEDtronics has developed a new energy-efficient, vibration-resistant T8 and T12/2-pin fluorescent-replacement LED tube light for public transit buses and railcars. The tubes are designed to easily replace the conventional fluorescent tubes found in most public transportation without any retrofitting, using polycarbonate tubing that is safer than glass and can withstand harsher environments. www.ledtronics.com

3 LUCA BOLLARD
STRUCTURA

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4 SOLAR BOLLARDS
METEOR SOLAR LED

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5 T-SYSTEM
EWO

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6 SIERRA Q
HESSAMERICA

Hess has added a square architectural light column to the Sierra line of illuminated columns. Appropriate for a range of outdoor spaces, the 13-foot-tall extruded aluminum and matte translucent acrylic columns enclose a ceramic metal halide light source or customized color LEDs to provide uniformly distributed light at night. Matching bollards are also available. www.hessamerica.com

7 ERCO
POWERCAST

Erco's new Powercast range of outdoor floodlights and projectors is available with LED technology in warm- and daylight-white colors and different lenses, ideal for the illumination of facade details, signs, or landscaping applications. The multilayer powder-coated surfaces, lockable hinge, mounting bracket, and double-cable entry allow for efficient installation and durability in the elements. www.erco.com

OCTOBER

**WEDNESDAY 27
LECTURES**
Ted Egan, Egon Terplan, et al.
Planning Jobs to Reduce Emissions
12:30 p.m.
SPUR
654 Mission St.
San Francisco
www.spur.org

Zvi Hecker
Memory is the Soil of Architecture
7:00 p.m.
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St.
Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

Ernst van de Wetering
On Quality: The Master's Prototypes versus His Pupil's Variants
7:00 p.m.
J. Paul Getty Center
1200 Getty Center Dr.
Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

EVENT
2010 Design Awards Party
6:00 p.m.
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
5905 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
aialosangeles.org

**THURSDAY 28
LECTURES**
Chris Benner
City and Labor Planning? Regions, Communities, and Next-Generation Labor Organizations
5:00 p.m.
UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design
106 Wurster Hall
Berkeley
www.ced.berkeley.edu

Tony Bruzzone, Greg Harper, et al.
Future of the Bay Bridge Corridor
12:30 p.m.
SPUR
654 Mission St.
San Francisco
www.spur.org

In Medias Res: B+U With Stephen Phillips
7:30 p.m.
MAK Center for Art and Architecture
835 North King's Rd.
West Hollywood
www.laforum.org

EVENT
TNT: Public Art
7:00 p.m.
Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego
1100 & 1001 Kettner Blvd.
San Diego
www.mcasd.org

**FRIDAY 29
EXHIBITION OPENING**
Reclaimed: Paintings from the Collection of Jacques Goudstikker
Contemporary
Jewish Museum
736 Mission St.
San Francisco
www.theejm.org

**SATURDAY 30
LECTURE**
Mary Louise Hart
Art and Performance in Classical Greece
2:00 p.m.
J. Paul Getty Villa
17985 Pacific Coast Hwy.
Pacific Palisades
www.getty.edu

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Henri Cartier-Bresson: The Modern Century Exposed: Voyeurism, Surveillance, and the Camera Since 1870
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
151 3rd St., San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

WITH THE KIDS
Little Ghost Busters Unite!
11:00 a.m.
The Bowers Museum
2002 North Main St.
Santa Ana
www.bowers.org

**SUNDAY 31
EXHIBITION OPENINGS**
William Eggleston: Democratic Camera Photographs and Video, 1961–2008
Blinky Palermo: Retrospective 1964–1977
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
5905 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.lacma.org

NOVEMBER

**MONDAY 1
LECTURE**
Carrie Byles and Mark P. Sarkisian
The Intersection of Sustainability and High-Performance Design: The Regeneration of San Francisco
5:00 p.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St., San Francisco
www.aiaf.org

**TUESDAY 2
LECTURE**
George McNeely
Delayed Justice: Restitution of Looted Art
12:00 p.m.
Contemporary Jewish Museum
736 Mission St., San Francisco
www.theejm.org

**THURSDAY 4
EXHIBITION OPENING**
Stephen H. Kanner, FAIA
A Retrospective Exhibition
A+D Museum
6032 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.aplusrd.org

**SATURDAY 6
EXHIBITION OPENINGS**
Iannis Xenakis: Composer, Architect, Visionary
MOCA Pacific Design Center
8687 Melrose Ave.
West Hollywood
www.pacificdesigncenter.com

Candice Lin
Holograms
François Ghebaly Gallery
2600 La Cienega Blvd.
Los Angeles
ghebaly.com

**WEDNESDAY 10
SYMPOSIUM**
Prosperity Through Preservation: Adaptive Reuse as Economic Development Catalyst
9:00 a.m.
Ventura City Hall
501 Poli St.
Ventura
aialosangeles.org

**THURSDAY 11
EXHIBITION OPENING**
Mary Snowden
Down on the Farm
Braunstein/Quay Gallery
430 Clementina St.
San Francisco
www.bquayartgallery.com

**FRIDAY 12
SYMPOSIUM**
Bringing Home the Ranch: Urban Agriculture in Southern California
8:30 a.m.
Huntington Botanical Gardens
1151 Oxford Rd.
San Marino
www.huntington.org

**SATURDAY 13
LECTURE**
Rafael Viñoly
Work Is Better
6:00 p.m.
Palm Springs Art Museum
101 Museum Dr.
Palm Springs
www.psmuseum.org

**SUNDAY 14
EXHIBITION OPENING**
Curious George Saves the Day: The Art of Margret and H.A. Rey
Contemporary Jewish Museum
736 Mission St.
San Francisco
www.theejm.org

EVENT
Seeing Orange
Dutch Design Week Kickoff
4:00 p.m.
G-Star
76 Geary St.
San Francisco
www.seeing-orange.com

**TUESDAY 16
LECTURE**
Andrew Wolfram
Forgotten Modern Masters
6:00 p.m.
One Ferry Building
San Francisco
www.sfheritage.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Obsidian Mirror-Travels: Refracting Ancient Mexican Art and Archaeology
Imagining the Past in France, 1250–1500
J. Paul Getty Center
1200 Getty Center Dr.
Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

**WEDNESDAY 17
LECTURE**
Caroline Bos
Deep Planning: Relational Models for the Sustainable City
6:00 p.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St.
San Francisco
www.aiaf.org

**THURSDAY 18
LECTURES**
Julian Wekel
Berlin: Planning for the Urban Renaissance of a European Metropolis
7:00 p.m.
UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design
112 Wurster Hall, Berkeley
www.ced.berkeley.edu
Anne Hedeman
How the French Made History: Manuscripts and Images of the Past in Medieval France
7:00 p.m.
J. Paul Getty Center
1200 Getty Center Dr.
Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

FILM
Exit Through the Gift Shop
(Banksy, 2010), 87 min.
7:00 p.m.
Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego
700 Prospect St., La Jolla
www.mcasd.org

**FRIDAY 19
EXHIBITION OPENING**
Coy Howard
Part II: Whispers and Echoes
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

**SATURDAY 20
SYMPOSIUM**
The Swimming Pool in Southern California
Photography, 1945–1980
9:45 a.m.
Palm Springs Art Museum
101 Museum Dr., Palm Springs
www.psmuseum.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Lisa Sanditz, Brian Sharp
ACME.
6150 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.acmelosangeles.com

Steve Wolfe on Paper
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
5905 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
www.lacma.org

**SUNDAY 21
SYMPOSIUM**
Culture/Identity/Politics
2:00 p.m.
Orange County Museum of Art
850 San Clemente Dr.
Newport Beach
www.ocma.net

**SATURDAY 27
EXHIBITION OPENING**
Karl Benjamin: Under the Influence
Royale Projects
75270 Highway 111
Indian Wells
www.royaleprojects.com

DECEMBER

**WEDNESDAY 1
LECTURE**
James Caughman
The Development of Classic Modernism
11:00 a.m.
Pacific Design Center
8687 Melrose Ave.
West Hollywood
www.pacificdesigncenter.com



NICOLAS BOREL

JAKOB + MACFARLANE: ABOUT
Southern California Institute of Architecture
350 Merrick Street, Los Angeles
November 3 through December 12

The Paris-based practice Jakob + MacFarlane has made a splash with its digitally-driven explorations of new materials and fabrication technologies—in particular the recent completion of the City of Fashion and Design, an experiment in creative reuse on the Paris waterfront. Offering a peek at the firm's work-in-progress, *Jakob + MacFarlane: ABOUT*, opening next week at SCI-Arc, showcases drawings, renderings, and photographs of two projects currently under construction. The first, a new home for the FRAC architecture center and museum in Orléans, is conceptually based on the convergence of three historical periods, symbolized by three vertical "chimneys" that rise over the Loire River. The second project, the Orange Box in Lyon (above), is designed as a response not to history but to diverse environmental conditions through its bright orange, porous skin. The exhibition could be considered a homecoming for principal Brendan MacFarlane, who received his B.Arch degree from SCI-Arc in 1984 and will soon be honored with the institute's Distinguished Alumni Award.



COURTESY CRAIG KRULL GALLERY

JULIUS SHULMAN: CENTENNIAL 10/10/10
Craig Krull Gallery
2525 Michigan Avenue, Santa Monica
Through November 20

As part of the citywide extravaganza saluting the centennial of Julius Shulman's birth, the Craig Krull Gallery showcases some three dozen largely unseen vintage prints from the famed photographer's personal collection. Consisting mainly of snapshots taken with a vest-pocket camera, these images capture the youthful exuberance of Shulman's student days at Berkeley—where he spent two years auditing classes and making a living of sorts selling photographs at the campus bookstore for \$2.50 a pop—along with the optimism and rugged beauty of 1930s-era California. Candid portraits such as *Julius and Friend on Car* (1935, above) radiate the hijinks and high spirits that were Shulman's trademark right up to his death in 2009. Other images reveal a maturing interest in architecture, including Los Angeles street scenes and moody views of the city's industrial quarters. With playful anecdotes scrawled on the reverse of several prints, the show is a must-see for aficionados of this titan of 20th-century photography.



SOM's Cathedral of Christ The Light is featured in the Biennial's architecture category.

COURTESY PMCA

STYLE AND SUBSTANCE

California Design Biennial
Pasadena Museum of California Art
490 East Union Street, Pasadena
Through October 31

For its fourth California Design Biennial, the Pasadena Museum of California Art relinquished its juried selection process in favor of five invited curators and a theme: *Action/Reaction*, or “How California’s established and emerging designers are responding to current economic, political, and environmental challenges.”

The museum also added architecture to the mix for the first time, with 15 projects selected by Frances Anderton, host of KCRW’s *DnA: Design and Architecture*. Her thoughtful choices amount to the biennial’s most impressive category, setting a standard that the other curators struggled to match.

As you might hope from a “best of” exhibition, each of the buildings on display—through large prints, drawings, and models—embodies outstanding formal and

material design values. More important is the fact that projects such as Michael Maltzan’s Inner-City Arts complex and Frederick Fisher’s Annenberg Community Beach House apply their California modern styling in the service of a highly contextual solution. In Maltzan’s case, the combination of dazzling white walls in a Skid Row site makes a deliberate statement about trust and commitment. Meanwhile, Fisher’s minimalist clean lines are used to frame, rather than overwrite, the site’s evolution from historic luxury mansion to public amenity.

But beyond their aesthetic charms and site-specific design solutions, Anderton’s choices reveal the transformative potential of architecture—those rare instances where a single building can utterly change our perception of a place. Perhaps the

most striking example she provides is the Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook by Safdie Rabines: a polished concrete, butterfly-roofed pavilion whose sleek but understated presence provides the perspectival shift necessary to recognize this scrubby, unfinished landscape of oil wells and cell-phone towers as a perfectly Angeleno urban park.

Lisa Little and Emily White of Layer’s Fat Fringe—a temporary canopy of die-cut paper—seems peculiarly out of place alongside these socially and environmentally responsive projects. Anderton explains its inclusion as the lone representative of a strand of iterative, process-focused material explorations by a new generation of Californian architects, including the fantastic lace and string experiments of Atelier **continued on page 18**

Retail Love Affair

*Design Research:
The Store That Brought Modern Living to American Homes*
Jane Thompson and Alexandra Lange
Chronicle Books
\$50.00

The name of the store, Design Research, suggested that the project was vast. By its very nature, design is a never-ending process of inquiry. Like most large ideas, the name got condensed to something bite-sized: D/R.

This new book is about architect Ben Thompson as much as the store he created. Call it Big Ben, Part 1. One of the authors of this volume, his widow Jane Thompson, is at work on a memoir, Big Ben, Part 2. Thompson is one of those architects that mostly only other architects know about, but his impact went far beyond the converted.

Thompson’s early houses and academic buildings in the 1940s followed the quiet modernist lead of his partner at The Architects’ Collaborative, Walter Gropius. Thompson didn’t produce his most significant architectural work until he struck out on his own in the 1960s, integrating retail into the fabric of the city. He did this most famously at Faneuil Hall in Boston, South Street Seaport in Manhattan, and Harborplace in Boston. His abilities in this area no doubt grew in part because of his hands-on retail experience at D/R, which he founded in 1953.

Design Research educated generations of Marimekko-loving modernists who would go on to shop at Design Within Reach, Crate & Barrel, Pottery Barn, and Conran, as well as at smaller modernist shops across the country. Even the D/R price tags would inform the shopper of the item’s design provenance. Thompson created some great shops, but more profoundly, he also changed the culture. *New Yorker* architecture critic Paul Goldberger outlines this accomplishment in his afterword.

Rob Forbes, founder of Design Within Reach, perhaps the most famous recent domestic design emporium, writes a foreword that discusses his own debt to Thompson and D/R. In between the two essays, Jane Thompson and her coauthor, architecture and design journalist Alexandra

Lange, have built a structure for the book as transparent yet nuanced as Thompson’s own concrete masterpiece of a building for D/R in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In some ways, it is a tragic narrative about a creative man, his vision, his success, his zenith, his loss, and his legacy—one that is told, oddly enough, through the lens of a small chain of cutting-edge design stores.

The authors quote Thompson’s unpublished memoirs throughout, yet they also went to a lot of trouble to find several former D/R employees (including the late *New York Times* architecture critic Herbert Muschamp) and weave their viewpoints into an ongoing oral history that peppers the more formal essays. (Speaking of pepper, it was Thompson who brought us those great Peugeot pepper mills.) This parallels the way Thompson worked, asking the staff for their input and giving them a strong voice in the store’s look and direction. There are also reproductions of significant articles about D/R, including Janet Malcolm’s fine essay from the November 7, 1970, issue of *The New Yorker*.

The book reproduces the excellent photos of the stores on Brattle Street in Cambridge, but there are few

professional shots of the other locations. To compensate for this, the graphic designers at Pentagram use a lot of yellow type, yellow pages, and white space. Other than the hairstyles and automobiles in the photos, the layout of the book and the designs contained within are perfectly matched and timeless, which speaks to Thompson’s prescience.

Of course, it wasn’t just his good taste that made the store bloom so brightly. Thompson had a few lucky breaks, like Jackie Kennedy sporting a Marimekko dress on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* and Julia Child asking the store for help with cookware and set design when she launched her cooking show. Media helps. But as the book points out, Thompson hired talented people and let them fulfill his vision. The authors are to be commended for allowing some of the negative aspects to be told, like other, more outmoded hiring policies that Thompson employed. It’s part of the history.

In his own retail environment, Thompson was able to create a complete setting where interiors and architecture could come together, and it lasted a quarter of a century. His genius was for creating the armature for all kinds of creative reinvention, whether it was as chairman of Harvard’s Department of Architecture, as the father of festival retail, or as the creator of Design Research. **continued on page 18**

Finnish models in Marimekko fashions for a story in a 1966 issue of *Life* magazine.



TONY VACCARO

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER OCTOBER 27, 2010



AC Martin's Hollenbeck Community Police Station, another Biennial selection.

TIMOTHY HURSLEY

STYLE AND SUBSTANCE continued from page 17
Manferdini and Ball-Nogues.

Of course, complaining that a design biennial is uneven somewhat misses the point: More than half the fun of these kinds of grab-bag exhibitions lies in the treasure hunt, as visitors single out their own aesthetic highlights and thematic convergences. On that basis, the show is an indisputable success. There is, quite simply, gorgeous and thought-provoking design on display.

The fashion design category, curated by

Rose Apodaca, all but ignores the stated theme of the biennial in favor of a single-minded focus on wildly expensive and idiosyncratic examples of craftsmanship. Nonetheless, Koi Suwannagate's hand-sculpted cashmere, and Raven Kaufman's beetle-carapace-encrusted accessories, are breathtaking, both in terms of their visual impact and as physical manifestations of thousands of hours of artisanal labor.

Stewart Reed's transportation design selection, while equally unengaged with

the biennial's central question, is much less successful. Admittedly, its most striking inclusions—the Virgin Galactic SpaceShip2 and the Seabreacher, a dolphin-shaped submarine—are poorly represented by diminutive photos. Still, it is hard to find much to marvel at in a bicycle whose sole recommendation seems to be that it is 2 percent more aerodynamically efficient than its rivals, or BMW's Bavaria Deep Blue 46, which is nothing more than a nice-looking luxury yacht.

Curiously, the biennial's most provocative idea emerges from its most chaotic sections—product design and graphic design. Tucked in between underwhelming choices, such as a handful of low-cost Heath tiles and the California College of the Arts' recycling decision-maker, are a couple of intriguing projects that rethink the role of the designer altogether.

IDEO's Human-Centered Design Toolkit is a free guide created to help nonprofits do their jobs more effectively, while Twitter's retweet functionality was designed by its user base, who were in turn empowered by the platform's deliberate flexibility. Although the former is classified as graphic design and the latter as product design, they actually share a transdisciplinary approach that reimagines design itself as a process that facilitates innovation, rather than as a specialist craft.

This vision, in which the designer willingly cedes tools to others while vastly increasing the discipline's remit to include systemic problems, is the most intriguing response to contemporary challenges on offer at the biennial—a reaction that results in much more effective action.

LOS ANGELES-BASED WRITER NICOLA TWILLEY IS THE AUTHOR OF THE BLOG EDIBLE GEOGRAPHY.



EZRA STOLLER/ESTO

The D/R store in Cambridge featured an open-book display for the neighborhood.

RETAIL LOVE AFFAIR continued from page 17

A key part of the history is tucked away on the last page of the book, before the list of contributors, telling of the chain's demise. The opening of Thompson's great architectural achievement at 48 Brattle Street in 1969 took place under a cloud of litigation that resulted from a hostile takeover. No doubt there is a larger tale yet to be told. Can a business that prioritizes a creative vision of excellence over quarterly earnings survive? Or are all businesses now short-lived until the next takeover and eventual bankruptcy? That isn't the tale of this volume. But perhaps Jane Thompson's memoirs will tell us more about how her husband created a successful business where design came first. One former employee told me that the book should have been titled "D/R: A Love Story." You can feel the love on every page.

KENNETH CALDWELL IS A WRITER AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT BASED IN SAN FRANCISCO.

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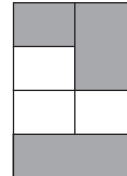
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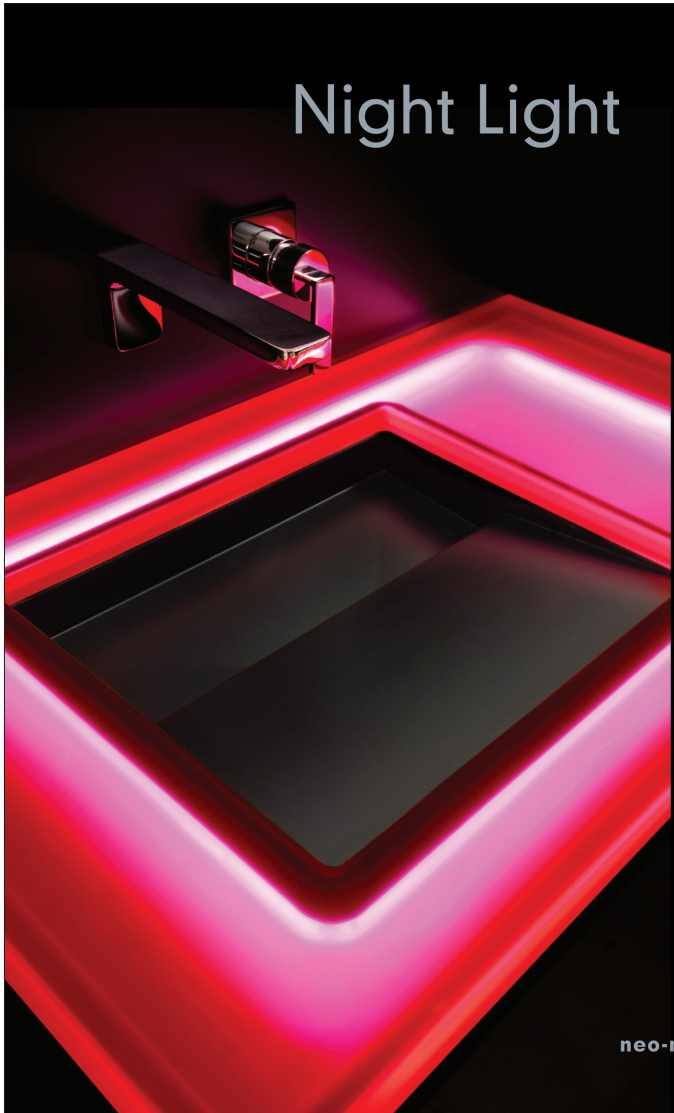
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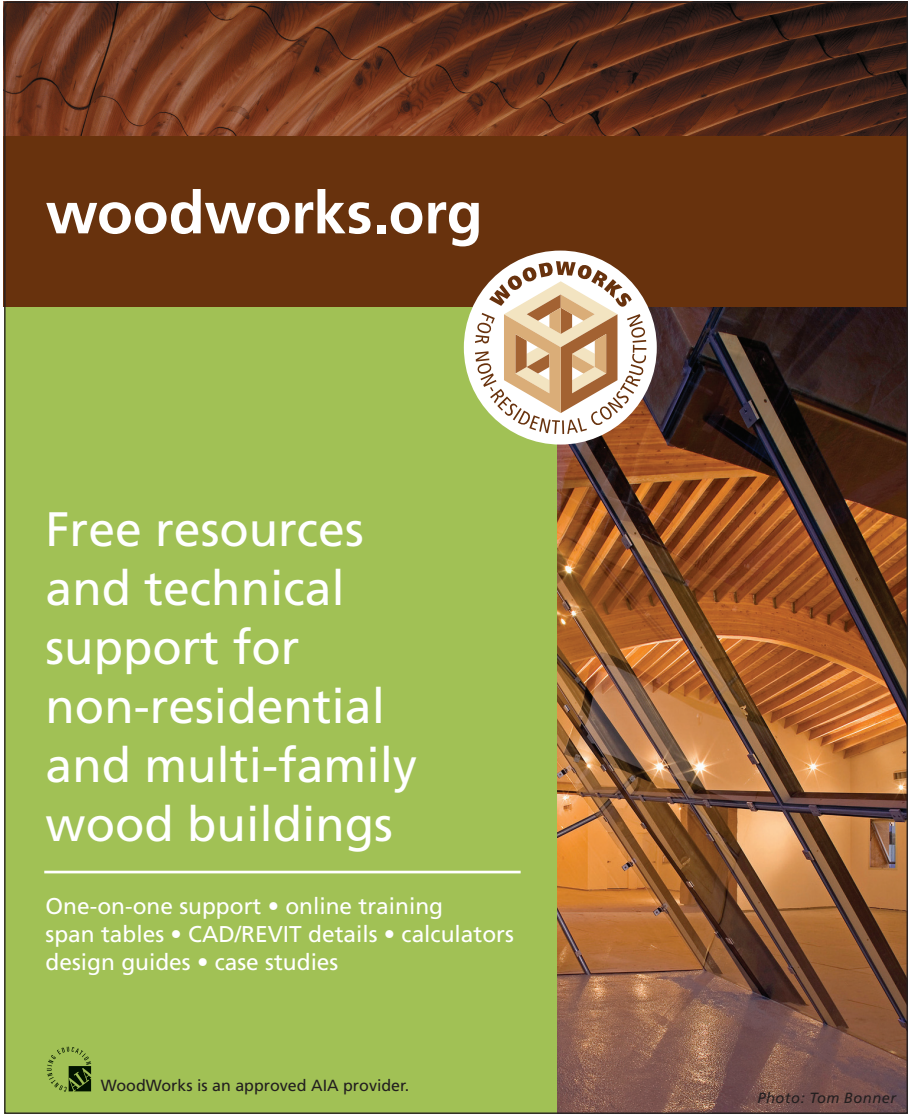
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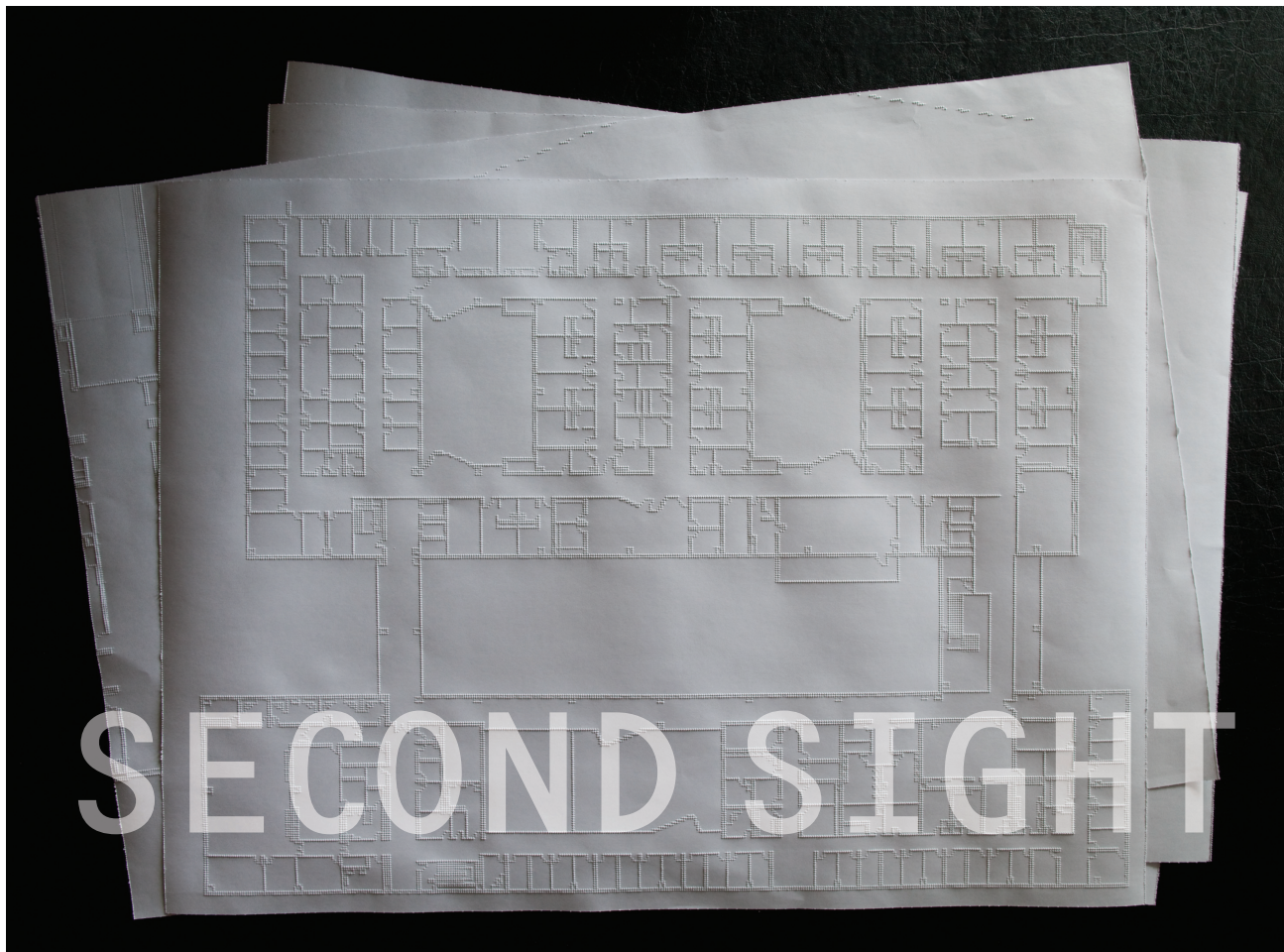
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Left: An embossed plan from a large-format printer used by Downey.

In 2008, surgery to treat a brain tumor left San Francisco-based architect Chris Downey blind at the age of 45. Soon after returning to work, Downey's loss of sight proved an unexpected strength, leading to a niche as a specialty consultant on projects for those with sensory impairments. Veteran real estate and architecture writer/editor Peter Slatin, who has experienced a gradual loss of sight since his teens and is now almost completely blind, recently spoke to Downey about his approach to the world of practice, his design tools, and the full sensory experience of architecture.

How did you get here? What kinds of projects were you involved in before you lost your sight, and what was your role?

At the start of January 2008, I joined Michelle Kaufmann Designs (MKD) as the managing principal. MKD was a design/build company specializing in green, prefabricated, modular homes. My role was broad, including design direction, firm management, and client relations. The work was all residential, primarily single-family. Two and a half months into the new job, I reported for surgery to remove a brain tumor that was discovered a month earlier.

The surgery left you without sight. What projects have you worked on since you resumed practicing?

I resumed work exactly one month after losing my sight. It was a little crazy, as I had not started any of the rehabilitation training for sight loss, and there I was back in the office. But the leadership and staff were all incredibly encouraging and supportive. Eventually, the rehabilitation services started, including the orientation and mobility skills that I needed and the computer skills that I needed to engage in our technology-driven profession. It was all coming together late that fall when the economy tanked. As layoffs mounted, I

too had to go in December 2008.

Starting 2009 unemployed as an architect who had been blind for less than ten months was not particularly auspicious. Within a month, however, I was connected with the Design Partnership in San Francisco, which was working on a Polytrauma and Blind Rehabilitation Center for the Department of Veterans Affairs in Palo Alto, together with SmithGroup out of San Francisco. The project was in design development, yet the client and the team were becoming aware that they really didn't understand how space and architecture would be experienced and managed by users who would not see the building. When I showed up as a newly blinded architect with 20 years of experience, there seemed an opportunity to bridge that gap. The fact that I was a rookie at being blind was even better, as I was not that far removed from the experience of the veterans who were dealing with their new vision loss.

The project quickly illuminated a spectrum of practice where my blindness could be harnessed as a strength. I started to focus my professional interest on projects for the blind such as schools, service providers, and rehabilitation centers. Along with the continuing VA project, I'm working with Starkweather Bondy Architecture in Oakland on an expansion of the Guide Dogs for the Blind school in San Rafael, California. I'm also consulting with Magnusson Architecture and Planning in New York for the renovation of the Associated Blind Housing project, a 220-unit residential building on West 23rd Street in Manhattan.

I'm also exploring work on other project types that can be difficult for blind users, such as transit centers, airports, and museums. These places can be made accessible in ways that are not simply a band-aid or an applied adaptation. At cultural and

science centers, accessibility codes have removed barriers to independent physical entry and mobility, yet for the blind that simply gets us into the space, where we are free to roam around. Little has been done to provide further guidance to those with sensory impairments.

What are your new tools? And how many of your old tools are still usable?

Everyone assumes that architects draw and that it is a very visual profession. I tend to disagree. Architecture is first and foremost a creative endeavor. We think, we consider, we research, we study, and we take it into form via tools like drawing and modeling. If you can't see the paper or the monitor before you, how else can architectural design be created? Most of us walk down the street relying heavily on our sight, yet those with visual impairments find non-visual techniques for getting around. The same is true with most other things, including architecture.

I do still draw occasionally by drawing on a raised line drawing kit. It consists of a rubber clipboard with thin mylar. As you draw with an inkless Teflon-tip pen, the line raises behind the stroke. The challenge is that it does not provide a way to sketch on top of another image. This took a while to figure out. But I have been working with a large-format embossing printer that provides a tactile form of the drawing by converting the linework into a series of dots. It even creates line weights. The drawings do need to be slightly simplified, as too much graphic information easily results in lost time and confusion.

Reading a drawing with your fingers is a totally different process than seeing it with your eyes. With sight, you immediately see the whole and you drill deeper into the detail. When reading with my fingers, I read from the detail toward the full image. It took a while to make this work, as I need-

ed to create the neurological connections between fingertips and brain. To do this, I started to study Braille, which it was important for me to learn anyway.

In the summer of 2009, I participated as a mentor in a program for blind high-school students from around the country at the University of Maryland, sponsored by the National Federation of the Blind. One of the tools they worked with was a product called Wikki Stix, which are just thin wax sticks that you can easily bend, curve, or stick together. I now use them to sketch on top of the embossed plots. I can generate all sorts of options by just peeling off sections and trying again.

How has your understanding of space, light, and materials changed? And has being blind changed your approach to design?

Becoming a fully actualized blind person doesn't happen overnight. It is commonly understood that 80 percent of the architectural interface is through vision. When sight is lost, the mind starts to rely more heavily on the remaining senses. In my case, I also lost all sense of smell, so it's down to acoustics and touch, as well as muscle memory and other more subtle sensory cues.

I rely on a cane for mobility and not a dog, in part because I appreciate the acoustic feedback of space. The cane helps me discover things around me. Quite often when walking through town, people try to steer me around obstacles yet that's exactly what I'm looking for. If I don't hit it with my cane, how do I know where I am? You quickly learn to catalogue a lot of stuff and it becomes quite surprising when you realize that you know exactly where you are with a simple tap of an object or a wall with a cane. You can often tell how high a ceiling is by listening for the reverberation of a tap or a clap off the ceiling or the bounceback off a distant wall. These aren't supersensory levels but rather the product of the mind not overwhelmed with visual inputs. The brain simply processes the same impulses with a different bias.

Light, however, is a very poetic part of architecture that brings space to life. The rules and the calculations are all the same, and I still build mental models using images from 45 years of sight.

Materials have taken on new significance for me. Traditionally, material palettes are developed for their visual composition. I now like to expand choices to a textural, tactile palette. I like to think of the front-door handle as the handshake of the building—the feel of the grip speaks volume. Handrails at the stair or ramp are the same. There are so many places in a building that are meant for touch, yet architects are so inundated with drawings and production that they can forget what it's really like to inhabit a building. With all the technological development around us, architecture remains a full sensory experience. You can't get it on your iPhone or on the web. Perhaps that makes it nostalgic—or perhaps it actually makes it more vital and alive.

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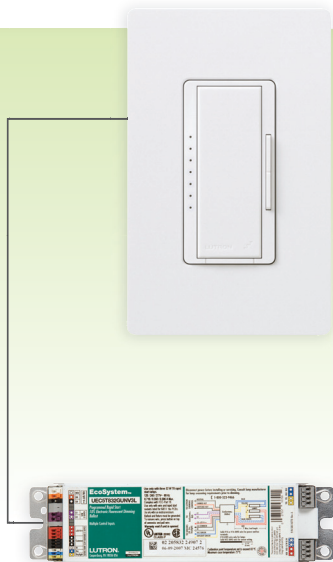
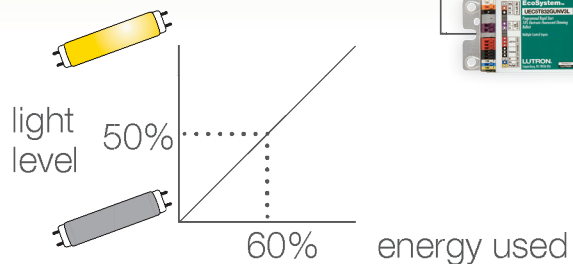
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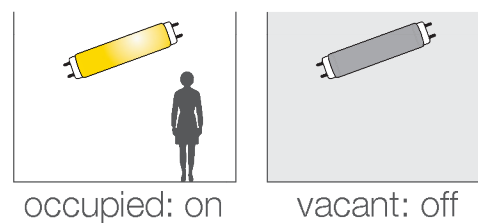
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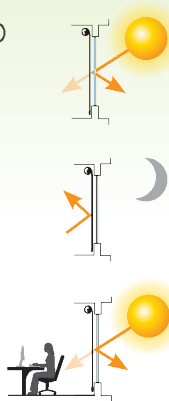
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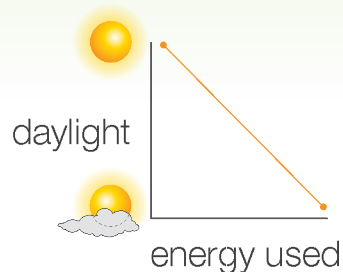
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